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# HOME SWEET HOME

**THE CULVER GIRLS**  
whip up treats and memories with their  
mother using a DCS by Fisher & Paykel  
48-inch Professional Gas Range



**M**om holds the bowl while each girl adds a carefully measured ingredient. They hurry through these first steps, giggling in anticipation. Then as if it were a theater, silence befalls the family's kitchen, and the two girls concentrate on the most delicate task. Tap tap. A shell cracks, and a yolk plops onto the mountain of flour.

"That's my favorite part," says 6-year-old Caroline Culver. "I almost never get any shells in," she adds proudly. "I only did once when I was 5." She cracks another. Then her 9-year-old sister, Kate, begins to stir the mixture into a gooey, chocolaty cupcake batter. Simultaneously, her bewitching laughter whips the kitchen of her family's Chicago home into a party. She lifts the batter-laden whisk high above the bowl, letting chocolate drip while her sister falls to stitches. The two take turns tasting with bowl scrapers, tasting with their fingers, tasting from each other's fingers and letting their mom have a lick or two, as well.

"I was always into baking as a kid myself," says Sue Culver. "Now they're finally old enough to do it without the kitchen turning into a total disaster," she adds with a laugh. Regardless of how much chocolate ends up on faces and the floor, the Culvers' DCS by Fisher & Paykel 48-inch Professional Gas Range makes the actual baking part a cinch.

With primary and secondary oven space, the Culvers can bake separate items that require different temperatures at the same time. "We can bake a batch of brownies," says Sue, "while we wait for dinner to finish in the other oven." Plus, precise heat removes the guesswork so cupcakes, cookies, bars, pies, you name it, come out perfect every time.

Less worry about the results means more focus on concocting the important stuff: good times. "Some of my favorite memories growing up are of decorating cookies with my mom," says Sue. Sue's carrying on the tradition by starting a cookie cutter collection with Kate and Caroline. "I would spend hours just putting the bow tie on the gingerbread man," she adds. "That's kind of what you are like," she says to Caroline. "But your sister is more like, 'How much frosting can we get on there?'"

Kate smiles up at her mom as the two work the double boiler. They're melting the chocolate for the aforementioned gobs and gobs of frosting. The precision of the DCS range isn't just confined to the oven. The burner offers total heat control so there's no scorching or clumping of the chocolate. "I feel like a master chef with this appliance," says Sue. "The simmer setting is incredible."

Sue speaks about her entire kitchen with the excitement of a child showing off her toys. She demonstrates the room's incredible functionality and ergonomics with a handy trash compactor, a recycle chute and self-retracting drawers that she and her husband, Bob, incorporated into the design. Her enthusiasm stems from the long work-in-progress of converting the building into a single-family home. The couple lived on the third floor first while rehabbing it. Bob is the managing director and head of marketing and new strategies for the real estate and security investment company of Security Capital, a JPMorgan affiliate, but he's

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(Clockwise from above) Batter up; Caroline nose how to have fun; Kate gets help from mom Sue with the double boiler on the DCS's ultimate simmer setting.







**Chocolate Cupcakes**

- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1 cup boiling water
- 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 1 cup granulated white sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 2 teaspoons pure vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Line 16 muffin cups with paper liners. In a small bowl, stir until smooth the boiling hot water and the cocoa powder. Let cool to room temperature. In another bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder and salt. Then with a mixer, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating until smooth. Beat in the vanilla extract. Add the flour mixture and beat only until incorporated. Then add the cooled cocoa mixture and stir until smooth.

Fill each muffin cup 2/3 full with batter, and bake for 16 to 20 minutes or until risen, springy to the touch and so a toothpick inserted into a cupcake comes out clean. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack to cool. Once the cupcakes have completely cooled, frost with icing.

See frosting recipe on page 40.



Giggling girls and globs of frosting make for the perfect after-school combination on a special day in the Culver kitchen.



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also an excellent woodworker and clearly great when it comes to rehabbing a home. “He proposed to me in the rubble,” she says, “and asked, ‘Could you live here?’” Slowly the two took over one floor at a time. “The old kitchen on the third floor is now the girls’ arts and crafts studio,” adds Sue.

In the heart of Chicago’s Lincoln Park neighborhood, the family is close to the famed park itself with its massive zoo, endless running and biking paths, and vistas and beaches of Lake Michigan. The Culvers are also steps from some of the city’s most exciting restaurants and shops and the deliciously local Green City Market, a handy resource for a mom who likes to cook dishes for her family with fresh, seasonal ingredients. But the Culvers’ cravings for their pad had a bit to do with aesthetics, too. “One of the reasons we were sold on the place was the view from the rooftop deck,” she says. “You can see the whole downtown skyline. It’s absolutely beautiful.”

With a swirling spire of frosting, Kate’s first cupcake is looking like it might belong among those towers of Chicago. “I always thought it would be fun to have a little bakery,” says Sue as she helps Caroline grip a pastry bag and

guides her hands in circles. “But who has time?” Caroline sneaks a pinch of sprinkles into her mouth and looks back at Mom with a sly, toothless grin. “Well, it could happen with me,” she says.

Sue smiles. They’re already selling their brownies at their lemonade stands,” she says. “And Caroline was quite the little marketing person.” But alas, it seems Caroline has set her aspirations elsewhere. “I want to be an artist when I grow up,” she says.

The girls resume decorating, using a stencil to create a powdered sugar butterfly on one cupcake and a bumblebee on another and then adding sprinkles for the eyes. “I want to be an artist, too,” adds Kate, “either that or else an ice cream truck driver.” The latter draws a smile from Mom. “I have to say, you are the best sharer,” she says. Kate casts a knowing glance and passes Caroline more sprinkles. Sharing comes with the territory. It’s in the older sister rulebook. Because big sisters drive first and date first and go away to school first...little sisters get to crack more eggs.